

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

THE LOGISTICS READINESS SQUADRONS AND LOGISTICS READINESS
OFFICER DEVELOPMENT AND COMPOSITION: STOP THE CONTINUOUS
CHANGE —WE'VE GOT IT RIGHT

By

Ted A. Lewis, Lt Col, USAF

A Research Paper Submitted to the Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

17 February 2009

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the US government or the Departments of Defense. In accordance with Air Force Instruction 51-303, it is not copyrighted, but is the property of the United States government.

Contents

Disclaimer.....	2
Contents.....	3
Illustrations.....	4
Biography.....	5
Abstract.....	6
Introduction.....	7
State of Continuous Organizational Change.....	7
History and Background.....	9
A Specialized Logistics Career Field and World Events Drive Change.....	9
Another Seminal Event—The CLR.....	12
Almost Change in 2008...What Does the Future Hold?.....	13
LRS Evolution—From Functional to Process-Centric Organization.....	14
LRS—Practical Span of Control and Follow Doctrine.....	16
Current LRO Development – Meets Air Force and Joint Requirements.....	18
Are We Preparing and Grooming Our LROs—Yes!.....	18
Summary.....	19
Recommendations.....	21
Bibliography.....	31
End Notes.....	33

Illustrations

Table 1. Synopsis: Maintenance and Logistics Centralized/Decentralized History.....	24
Table 2. LRO Training Flow (Accession LROs).....	25
Appendix 1. LRS Organizational Structure 2002—2005.....	26
Appendix 2. LRO Organizational Structure 2006—Present.....	27
Appendix 3. LRO Career Pyramid.....	28
Appendix 4. Evolution of LRS—From Functional to Process-Centric.....	29
Appendix 5. LRO Training and Education Continuum.....	30

Biography

Lt Col Ted Lewis is a career Logistics Readiness Officer with approximately 18 years of active military service and has been selected to become the Deputy Commander, 49th Mission Support Group, Holloman AFB, NM, following his current duty as a student at Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama. He received his commission through the Reserve Officer Training Corps in 1991 and entered the Air Force as a Supply Officer. He cross-trained into aircraft maintenance where he held sortie support, sortie generation and maintenance supervisor positions. He served as an aide de camp to the Ogden Air Logistics Center Commander and is a level two program manager in the acquisition career field. He has deployed to Iraq and completed a one-year short tour assignment to Kunsan, Korea. He is a graduated Logistics Readiness Squadron Commander and has served in six different Air Force Major Commands plus a joint tour at United States Pacific Command.

Abstract

Over the past two decades the logistics career field has incorporated more sweeping organizational transformations than were attempted in the preceding 40 years. Change in the logistics arena has taken many forms: from decentralization to centralization, centralization to decentralization, chain of command realignments, and consolidation of career fields from specialists to generalists. Many of the changes were very necessary and appropriate to integrate technology and adapt to the operational environment. However, it is important to recognize constantly recurring organizational change often causes turmoil which can increase costs and lead to motivational problems—especially when successive senior leaders simply amend the organization back to its previous construct. The most recent logistics reorganization, which still endures today, was resultant of the 2001 Chief of Staff of the Air Force Logistics Review. This catalytic event completely transformed the logistics community. It was the vanguard event which not only established today's aircraft maintenance structure, but also established the Logistics Readiness Officer and the Logistics Readiness Squadron. This paper argues that the Air Force has appropriately organized and located the Logistics Readiness Squadron within the Mission Support Group to optimize mission accomplishment enabled by process oriented management, practical span of control, and effective officer development to operate in both Air Force and joint arenas. Analysis will center on the evolution of the Logistics Readiness Squadron and the Logistics Readiness Officer's development as a career field throughout the last two decades.

Introduction

“Don’t let the perfect be the enemy of the very good.”

We’ve all heard it, most have experienced it--the proverbial “only thing constant is change.” As a recently retiring Chief Master Sergeant so aptly and succinctly stated, “I’ve been zero defected, total quality managed, micromanaged, one-minute managed, synergized, had my paradigms shifted, had my paradigms broken, and been told to decrease my habits to seven.”¹ One could even add Managed by Objectives, Velocity Maintenance and Theory of Constraints to the list. For those who have served our great U.S. Air Force the last two decades the aforementioned quote evokes emotions—some positive, some negative. Regardless of the emotions induced from the above personal and process improvement models, this paper will instead objectively focus on the tangible, concrete *organizational changes* in our Air Force.

State of Continuous Organizational Change

Indeed, throughout the relatively short history of the Air Force, organizational change has been an important part of remaining relevant and ready. Moreover, an organization which refuses to adapt to developing and changing environments is bound to become irrelevant, possibly extinct; especially in the globalized world we live in today. Like most institutions, the Air Force has altered its organizational design numerous times to adapt to changing environments and increase capability (Table 1). Consequently, organizational change has almost become a centerpiece--even an expectation--of Air Force senior leaders during their tenure. This has been especially prevalent within the logistics community.

General Bill Creech’s Combat Oriented Maintenance Organization and Combat Oriented Supply Organization of the 1970s and 1980s was followed by General McPeak’s Objective Wing

structure in the 1990s. After the Objective Wing the Air Force returned to the traditional or Combat Wing structure in early 2002 realigning multiple logistics career fields and merging organizations. If not for the recent Air Force leadership change in 2008 yet another reorganization would have taken place, separating key logistics capabilities and realigning support squadrons under Operations and Maintenance groups. No doubt, on the near-term horizon another organization change is under consideration and once again logistics will be the centerpiece. Organizational change proposals include separating the LRS yet again and moving key components into a newly designated Maintenance Generation Group (MGG). Thus, only by taking a broader view of organizational change in the logistics community over the last two decades, can the full spectrum of structural alterations within the career field be appreciated. This period reflects a constantly changing environment which has left the logistics community in a continuous state of fluctuation and turmoil while proving detrimental to tradition and culture. As leaders it is important we appreciate where we've come from to best determine our future. Conversely an organization which doesn't adapt its structure could underperform and eventually become obsolete. Just as most things in life there must be a balance. Organizational change theorist John Kotter argues true, lasting transformation doesn't occur unless the entire culture of an organization is motivated to change. This can take years. Meanwhile, we must be mindful that too much organizational change causes instability, increases costs and impedes motivation.

This paper argues that the Air Force has appropriately organized and located the Logistics Readiness Squadron within the Mission Support Group to optimize mission accomplishment enabled by process oriented management, practical span of control, and effective officer development to operate in both Air Force and joint arenas. Analysis will center on the evolution of the Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) and the Logistics Readiness Officer's (LRO)

development as a career field throughout the last two decades. The current LRS structure and location in the wing as well as the LRO career field should be left alone to settle, mature and develop as a career field without any additional tinkering in the coming decade—we’ve got it right.

History and Background

*“In a given area, or for a given mission, a single authority...should be responsible for logistics.”
– 1949 Army Field Service Regulations on unity of command principle of logistics²*

The age old axiom, “those who do not study history are bound to repeat it” is apropos when considering the significant organizational changes, specifically within the logistics community, since the Air Force became a separate service. Before another organizational change within our Air Force logistics community, senior leaders must learn from and appreciate how repeated structure change causes unnecessary turmoil. Instead of seeking to restructure the institution as the only or initial option, leadership should first examine the *efficiency and effectiveness of current processes* within the existing structure and focus their energy toward improving them.

A Specialized Logistics Career Field and World Events Drive Change

When you consider major organizational change in the Air Force since the mid 1980s, one can basically summarize it as a response to changing world events and changing Air Force leadership. With each major reorganization logistics has been a central theme and an integral part of Air Force organizational change. In the past, Air Force logisticians have been functionally aligned among four primary career fields—supply, transportation, logistics plans and maintenance. Within the scope of this paper, the primary career field in discussion is the LRO

which now encompasses supply, transportation and logistics plans officers and by extension the LRS which employs the LROs.

Up until the early 1990s, before the Objective Wing construct, there was little officer development outside one of the four functional logistics specialties. Once an Air Force logistics officer advanced down a specific logistics career field path, there was little opportunity (no institutional program) to broaden into another logistics career field; consequently each officer operated primarily within his own specialty and organizational structure through the course of a career. Essentially the logistics career fields were specialists. Each career field had a vertical progression for its officers, primarily along functional lines, seldom crossing over horizontally into another logistics discipline. Further, the assignment process reinforced this specialist mentality. For example, continuously assigning retail supply officers to tactical positions, wholesale supply officers to logistics centers, ground transporters to vehicle maintenance units and air transporters to aerial ports was the norm. Each was “stove-piped” and continued down their narrow career path—basically trapped in an in-breeding cycle of officer development supported by the organizational structure. Consequently, as logistics officers progressed in rank and transitioned to the operational and strategic environment there was little understanding of logistics disciplines outside one’s primary field of expertise. To alleviate growing concerns of narrowly focused logisticians, cross-over training for the four logistics career fields began in earnest in the 1990s. Cross-training logisticians fundamentally altered the specialist mindset and expanded the career field aperture and comprehension of *logistics as a system*. The objective—well-rounded logistics officers who understand the interplay and interdependence of logistics at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. The logistics officer cross-training concept proved

beneficial and was a seminal event for further organizational change and career field development in the following years.

In the late 1970s General Creech, then Commander of the Tactical Air Command, established an effective decentralized logistics support concept called Combat Oriented Maintenance Organization (COMO) and Combat Oriented Supply Organization (COSO). This organizational design, which endured for almost 15 years from 1978-1992, was the longest period of organizational stability in the logistics arena ever.³ With COSO, supply personnel and aircraft parts were decentralized placing supply expertise, facilities and aircraft parts closer to the flight-line to better support the wing's flying mission. However, two major historical events caused Air Force leadership to consider substantial organizational change to adapt to an evolving mission and shifting strategic environment. First, the fall of the Soviet Union as the sole major adversary to the United States in 1989 and second, Operation DESERT STORM in 1991, which reverberated throughout the world and cultivated a different perspective regarding the application of air power. As the world adjusted to the United States as the sole global hegemony, these two events affected how the Air Force would organize itself to meet the increasing demands of rapid response to regional conflicts around the globe. Consequently, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General McPeak, reorganized the Air Force to solve two competing demands—meet increasing global Air Force deployment requirements while simultaneously implementing efforts to downsize the force and, by extension, our logistics footprint abroad. General McPeak stated the primary mission of the Air Force was to *operate and employ* its weapon systems and he was a strong advocate of centralized operations.⁴ Subsequently, organizational change took place (from centralization to decentralization) moving flight-line maintenance into the flying squadrons (under the Operations Group) essentially separating on-equipment maintenance from off-equipment maintenance and

the three other functional counterparts—supply, transportation and logistics plans. The new organizational design was called the Objective Wing structure giving operators authority over flight-line maintenance. McPeak's Objective Wing construct lasted from 1991-2001, however concerns were elevated as mission capability rates declined from 83 percent in 1994 to 76 percent in 1999.⁵

Another Seminal Event—The CLR

In September 1999, the erosion of aircraft health and readiness as well as perceived long-term deficiencies in logistics officer development, prompted the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force (CSAF), General John Jumper, to initiate an enterprise-wide review of Air Force logistics called the CSAF Logistics Review (CLR). The year-long assessment of Air Force logistics was not influenced by failed inspection(s) or top leadership's personal beliefs on how to organize and structure the institution. Instead, it was intended to enhance our ability to logistically support the Expeditionary Air Force (EAF) by improving logistics processes, reducing our logistics footprint and improving deployment execution.⁶ Again, there were various reasons for another change in our organizational structure.⁷

However, General Jumper's primary motivation behind another organizational change relates to a fundamental belief that operators should focus on employing our nation's aircraft and maintainers must focus on fixing aircraft.⁸ Essentially he believed the Air Force, at its core, needed specialists as operators and maintainers to fly and fix aircraft, respectively. Broad-minded generalist logisticians were crucial to support this fundamental core culture. The initiative to merge supply, transportation and logistics plans into one unit evolved from the mindset of a single authority for material management, distribution and deployment at the wing level. Jumper's

decision to return flight line maintenance to the Maintenance Group and merge the other three logistics disciplines creating the Logistics Readiness Squadron occurred in 2002—less than a decade after McPeak’s Objective Wing concept was introduced.

The supply, ground transportation and logistics plans career field merger in 2002 essentially consolidated three squadrons into one LRS organization principally structured along functional lines of operation. The LRS concept proved beneficial at the wing level providing a single logistician with authority over distribution, deployment processes and inventory management. There were further evolutionary changes in 2006. The LRS was internally restructured from a functional design to a more process oriented organization by reducing redundancies, streamlining processes and combining flights within the squadron. However, in 2008 yet another massive Air Force reorganization appeared on the horizon—again logistics was the centerpiece.

Almost Change in 2008... What Does the Future Hold?

In 2008 the logistics community was about to embark on another substantial organizational change if not for the resignation of the Air Force’s Secretary and Chief of Staff. The reorganization proposed returning, once again, on-equipment maintenance back within the Operations Group, dissolving the Maintenance Group and creating a Material Group. The Material Group would include off-equipment maintenance squadrons as well as the Mission Support Group’s LRS and Aerial Port Squadrons.

Yet another reorganization is under consideration⁹ in the logistics community in the next five years. In this reorganization, all logistics functions directly supporting flight-line operations will consolidate under one group called the Mission Generation Group (MGG). These upcoming

realignments which move fuels and specific supply disciplines to the MGG parallel historical oscillations the maintenance community endured since the Air Force became a separate service (Table 1). Essentially we will carve out critical core competencies of the LRO and specific logistics capabilities in the LRS and separate them into two groups—the MGG and MSG.

As leaders, if we learn anything from our history of organizational change, it certainly should include an understanding that changes must be anchored with “buy in” from the preponderance of Air Force logisticians. Otherwise the restructuring effort will fail to produce the desired improvements. The key question here is what is the sense of urgency for this upcoming change? Also, what specific faults in the current organizational structure are driving another organizational change? In *Leading Change*, Kotter advocates leadership must clearly define and articulate conditions for successful organizational change. The Air Force must guard against another organizational change strategy which doesn’t include an enduring vision, guiding coalition or changes which are not anchored by successive leadership. LRS has evolved into an effective process-oriented unit—chiefly owing to an articulated vision from the CLR and “buy in” from mid-level officers motivated for change who now lead these organizations. These officers have become the so called guiding coalition.

LRS Evolution—From Functional to Process-Centric Organization

One of the great strengths of Air Force logistics has been our ability to be in the forefront of innovation in our processes and organization...providing better, faster, cheaper and smarter support to readiness and the warfighter. We are about to do this again as we merge our supply and transportation squadrons.
– Brigadier General Robert E. Mansfield, Jr. and Brigadier General Teresa Peterson, USAF.¹⁰

Mansfield and Peterson were describing Jumper's 2002 reorganization and the underlying intent to synergize similar logistics functions into one organization to serve as the "single authority for the deployment and distribution processes by integrating wing-level supply and transportation squadrons."¹¹ The effort was the largest consolidation of logistics disciplines, outside of aircraft maintenance, since the 1947 birth of the Air Force. The CLR initiatives were designed to create core logistics capabilities to enable "the EAF to respond quickly and conduct sustained operations anywhere in the world."¹² Resultant from the 2001 CLR the LRS was established (appendix 1) and the LRO created. The LRS was designed to standardize deployment planning/execution and improve asset distribution by aligning logistics plans with the critical execution functions of supply and transportation. The LRO would then become the *multi-skilled, multi-level, single logistics authority* responsible to lead the LRS at the tactical level, satisfy staff requirements at operational and strategic levels and fill taskings in the joint arena.

Yet, after the 2002 LRS merger the LRS developed into a functionally stove-piped organization. While leadership deserves credit for recognizing commonalities among the supply, transportation and logistics plans disciplines, the 2002 merger did little to improve logistics responsiveness. Many redundancies and inefficiencies remained until 2006 when the LRS restructured again and evolved into a leaned-out, process-centric organization.

Recognizing the inefficiencies of functional alignment, the Air Force logistics community reorganized itself in 2006 using continuous process improvement principals of eliminating unnecessary practices, increasing efficiency and focusing on improved effectiveness which align directly with the Air Force mission. The strategy centered on linking *capabilities to processes* by mapping out those processes central to the LRS mission. An enterprise-wide assessment to improve asset accountability and optimize resources across the logistics readiness spectrum was

accomplished.¹³ At the tactical level rapid improvement event teams were assembled to reorganize the LRS. Prior to 2006, LRS's seven flights (appendix 1), were all functionally organized principally along supply, transportation and logistics plans disciplines. The new LRS alignment, down to four flights (appendix 2), was process-engineered to eliminate logistics disciplines deemed either redundant or unnecessary. Concurrently, at the operational level logistics expertise was tasked with restructuring MAJCOM Headquarters A4 Directorates and consolidating the two remaining Regional Supply Squadrons into a single Global Logistics Support Center (GLSC). The GLSC became the organization wholly responsible for procurement and distribution of aircraft parts along each weapon system's supply chain. MAJCOM A4 Directorate staffs were restructured to mirror the tactical units they provide support and guidance to—the LRS. Thus an evolutionary, enterprise-wide approach to change occurred to improve efficiency and effectiveness of Air Force logistics organizations from a functional construct to the current process-oriented alignment (Appendix 4). While span of control is vast, the LRS structure drives efficiencies and follows doctrine.

LRS—Practical Span of Control & Follows Doctrine

“Flying and fixing our weapons systems are essential skill sets. They are the two hardest things we do in the Air Force...each requires PhD-level expertise, proficiency, and leadership.” – General John Jumper, CSAF Sight Picture 2002¹⁴

In 2002, General Jumper maintained our organizational structure must centralize “experts” in operations and maintenance groups to effectively achieve air power capabilities as well as develop highly proficient personnel in each group. The MSG, while significant in scope would consolidate all supporting capabilities not only to the flying mission but also other requirements on the base. The MSG span of control is significant with six squadrons under one group

commander, but when you consider the above principle to specialize in flying and fixing aircraft, the MSG construct acts as critical *enabler* to the fly/fix premise.

Therefore, we must be mindful of the CLR's impetus for transforming the logistics career field. At its apex was the need to develop a greater depth and breadth of understanding within logistics—aircraft maintenance (depth) and logistics readiness (breadth) to support the operator. For the LRO, the intent of the logistics transformation during the CLR was to develop a core of officers who understand the requirements of home-station logistics distribution and deployment along with bed down and sustainment at contingency locations. So similar to the MSG, the LRS span of control is large, but this is by design. First, separating deployments, distribution and inventory management away from maintenance essentially enables aircraft maintainers to build depth of knowledge and skills vital to the “fix” tenet. Depth of knowledge and skill is vital to effective aircraft maintenance.¹⁵ Second, the LRS's large scope facilitates an original intent of the CLR—to integrate commonalities between supply, transportation and logistics plans processes into a single authority. Third, as demonstrated from the most recent LRS reorganization in 2006, consolidating the aforementioned logistics functions into one organization led to process efficiencies and effectiveness cultivated by the enterprise-wide approach toward organizing logistics. Thus, LRS's significant scope acts to enable the Air Force mission while improving logistics efficacy. Along with designed span of control, basic Air Force doctrine supports the current LRS construct.

Air Force Doctrine Document 1 states, “Air Forces must be controlled by an Airman who maintains a broad perspective in prioritizing limited assets across the range of operations... centralized control maximizes the flexibility and effectiveness of air power.”¹⁶ Thus, as a basic tenet of airpower, centralized control is applicable to advocate for the current LRS organizational

structure and location in the wing. Fundamentally, centralized control of all logistics processes promotes unity of command and unity of effort. Further, it produces an economy of force by synchronizing the interdependent processes of supply, transportation and logistics planning under a single authority on base. Before the LRS was established, logistics operated in a decentralized construct with separate command authority impeding unity of effort. Thus, from a doctrinal perspective, the LRS is organized and located to best exploit an effective and efficient employment of logistics and *enable* the fly/fix tenet of the CLR.

Current LRO Development – Meets Air Force and Joint Requirements

Recent efforts to provide a consolidated training and education roadmap for the LRO, if left to mature, will produce logistics officers ready to operate effectively in both the Air Force and joint arenas. Further, LROs remain one of the most sought after officers in the Air Force and joint arena. This is evidenced by the Air Force's latest policy change which pushes the LRO into Tempo Band E forcing a 1:1 deployment to dwell time.¹⁷ Within the first two years new logistics officers are introduced and oriented to the squadron's major processes, attend the Logistics Officer Basic Course, become certified in one of three core logistics competencies and are quickly made available for deployment.

Are We Preparing and Grooming Our LROs—Yes!

The foundational guide for LRO training, education and experience is the November 2009 Air Force Career Field Education and Training Plan (CFETP). It describes the many opportunities for every LRO to attain the appropriate level of competence to meet Air Force and joint requirements (Table 2). LROs are now provided a consolidated list of education opportunities and logical training timeline to build depth and breadth of knowledge in the

logistics career field. The new CFETP, comparable to a syllabus for LRO development, outlines abundant opportunities for continuous education and training offered in both Air Force and joint arenas available across the entire arc of an LRO's career.

There are two mandatory LRO courses: Basic and Intermediate Logistics Readiness Officer Courses. These two formal courses are in addition to the three-phased LRO Orientation Program (LOOP) required for all first-assignment LROs to provide a foundation for their career in logistics. Finally, training and education opportunities are offered throughout the LRO's career with 23 formalized logistics courses.¹⁸ All told, the LRO's current opportunities for education, training and experience meet Air Force and joint requirements by developing *multi-skilled, multi-level, single-authority* logisticians (Appendix 3 and 5).

Summary

“If all you have is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail.”

If Air Force leadership only considers organizational change (the hammer) as the best tool to gain major process efficiency and effectiveness improvements, every perceived problem associated with improving the mission looks like a nail. Leaders must absolve themselves from the mindset that organizational change is the best method to fix problems or improve processes. There have been occasional instances where the environment for major reorganizations was appropriate. However, the Air Force will continue to have a difficult time anchoring substantive organizational change due to the constantly revolving door of senior leaders. Following a restructure, the Air Force has frequently reverted to a nearly identical alignment of a previous structure (Table 1). Conversely, an organization which fails to adapt to its environment will not survive. In consideration of these two facts, an organization undergoing frequent organizational

changes will compromise its culture, maturity and possibly relevance. Obviously, it's a balance and our senior leaders must understand that absent a guiding coalition to anchor productive organizational change following their departure, history demonstrates their changes are short lived and counter-productive. The Air Force has appropriately organized and located the Logistics Readiness Squadron within the Mission Support Group to optimize mission accomplishment enabled by process oriented management, practical span of control, and effective officer development to operate in both Air Force and joint arenas. Stability in Air Force logistics structure is an idea whose time has come.

It is repeatedly espoused throughout our Air Force—officers must be leaders first, managers second. Most completely understand the difference between managers and leaders, yet many act in a managerial capacity instead of leadership role when they are in influential positions. Kotter defines management as planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling and problem solving. Conversely, he defines leadership as envisioning the future, establishing direction (vision), aligning people, motivating and inspiring.¹⁹ This distinction is important. Kotter states “successful transformation is 70-90 percent leadership and only 10-30 percent management. Yet many organizations today don't have much leadership. Almost everyone thinks about the problem as one of managing change.”²⁰ Leadership must ensure their changes are anchored and have a guiding coalition to see it through, otherwise history demonstrates the institution will revert back to its previous construct. Ergo, the new organizational structure is transitory. As an alternative, leaders should *first* use an enterprise systems approach and search for problem root causes vice lurching into yet another reorganization that creates chaos and resolves nothing.

Recommendations

Air Force leadership must allow this new logistics structure to settle, mature and improve its efficiencies to ultimately become more effective. Conversely, what is not needed is yet another bifurcation anywhere within the Air Force logistics community. The LRO and LRS are only six years old and we've already restructured once. Give time for the processes to improve and the officers to use the aforementioned CFETP framework to develop—we've got it right, we just need time. Here are three recommendations:

First Diagnose The Problem, Then Determine If Organizational Change Really Solves It:

The year-long CLR in 2001 was the catalyst which transformed multiple career fields—it radically changed how we were organized. The CLR reorganization consolidated operators, maintainers and mission support personnel into separate organizations enabling each to focus on the *core capabilities* of fly, fix and support. General Jumper said, “My vision is that the groups in our wings will focus on their essential core capabilities. Operations of air and space weapons systems are a core competency, maintenance is a core competency and mission support, in the expeditionary, rapid reaction, contingency based USAF is another core competency of the USAF.”²¹ As with the CLR, Air Force logistics leadership must consider a two-part question: What is the current problem with our organizational structure and does reorganizing resolve it? Leadership must identify and point to empirical evidence that a problem even exists (i.e. declining aircraft maintenance rates, parts availability, systemic deployment problems, poor officer development) and demonstrate how the current organizational construct obstructs air power effectiveness and efficiency.

Systems Thinking Approach—LROs Need To Be Enterprise-Wide Leaders: Do not separate the LRO by placing some officers in an MGG while keeping others in the MSG. Centralized control and decentralized execution of logistics follows doctrine and enables critical capabilities in the Air Force—to fly and fix our aircraft. A systems thinking approach which unifies LROs sets conditions to build depth and breadth through career-long training, education and experience. Our LROs need to be enterprise-wide, systems-thinking logisticians who understand and can operate at tactical, operational and strategic levels. Currently the Air Force is on track to develop these holistically-minded officers in the six years since the LRO was created. Similar to developing the squadron or battalion commander...it is a process. Bifurcating LROs into two groups stems from a *decentralized control* mindset, which compromises the required logistics education, training and experience needed to develop the systems thinking approach for tomorrow's Air Force logisticians. Further, separating LROs would truncate the broad experience gained by developing officers throughout the arc of their career who understand the interdependence of tactical, operational, strategic and joint levels of logistics.

Just Manage The Seams: In this instance, seams are the critical points where two or more organizations meet or exchange resources. For the LRS and LRO seams can be aircraft maintenance, civil-engineering or other services in the joint arena. The bottom line is the requirement for logistics support is ubiquitous. Irrespective of organization structure, seams will remain which require relationship building rooted on trust and confidence. For instance, separating the LRS by placing portions of this squadron into the MGG simply creates additional seams with the segment of the LRS remaining in the MSG. Further, the MGG then becomes responsible not only for generating aircraft but also warehousing and inventory (aircraft petroleum and parts) management—thus creating unnecessary breadth when depth of knowledge

is paramount. Moreover, additional and needless organizational fissures are created between LROs in the MGG and MSG as well as the inevitable seam between the LRO and maintenance officer within the MGG. Most importantly, senior leaders should create an organization where natural process-oriented seams take place—then control those seams through high-quality leadership and management practices. Therefore, instead of hastily jumping to organizational change to solve this never ending dilemma, leadership must first exhaust efforts to develop relationships, improve processes and manage seams already in place.

These three recommendations call for an enterprise process improvement instead of a structural reorganization mindset. As we've seen, Air Force senior leaders too often choose the latter. The CLR was the catalytic event which drove the logistics community to establish effective doctrine, training and education for the LRO and organizational scope and construct for the LRS. The current structure develops multi-role logistics thinkers who understand enterprise-wide logistics to operate in the tactical, operational, strategic and joint environments. We've got it right—stability, stewardship and maturity of the current LRS organizational structure and LRO career field is what is needed now.

Table 1

Synopsis: Maintenance and Logistics Centralized/Decentralized History

Re-organization Theme	Summary of Reorganization
A Standardized, Decentralized Maintenance Structure (Establishment of the Air Force, 1947)	Hobson Plan: Four Groups—Combat Group (operators), Medical Group, Air Base Group (SFS, CE, etc), Maintenance and Supply Group. Organizational mxs under operator, field mxs under Mxs and Sups Grp; Crew chiefs managed all aspects of mxs on their aircraft
Berlin Airlift, Centralizing Trend with Depot Maintenance	Berlin Airlift adapted the existing decentralized mxs system into centralized control with specialist maintenance centers, and extensive depot assistance.
The 1950s, Centralized Maintenance Organizations FMS: Field Maintenance Squadron PMS: Periodic Maintenance Squadron EMS: Electronics Maintenance Squadron	First formalized move toward centralized maintenance at base level; FMS, PMS, EMS organizations under Maintenance. Organizational (on-equipment) maintenance units remained under operator's control
Mid-to late 1950s, AFM 66-1—Centralized Maintenance Trend OMS: Organizational Maintenance Squadrons	Moved organizational maintenance under single maintenance authority—Chief of Maintenance with three squadrons: OMS, FMS, EMS. No maintenance in flying units. Complexity of aircraft and greater specialization of manpower drove centralization movement. Job Control was C2.
1960s, Vietnam Conflict— Decentralizing Trend	OMS and portions of FMS and munitions back under flying squadrons (operators) due to deployed/dispersed units in Vietnam.
Mid-1970s, POMO concept—Decentralized Execution, Centralize Control (Production Oriented Maintenance Organization)	Budget Cuts, manpower reductions driven by declining specialist availability and skill levels
Late 1970s and 1980s, Increased Decentralized Execution DCM: Deputy Commander for Maintenance COMO: Combat Oriented Maintenance Organization COSO: Combat Oriented Supply Organization	COMO/COSO concept; decentralized AMUs into each flying unit in wing, supply decentralized into AMUs; DCMs controlled & coordinated all wing maintenance
Mid- to Late-1990s, Objective Wing—Decentralized Structure AGS: Aircraft Generation Squadron	Era of AGS ² ; maintenance back under flying squadrons—handles all on-equip maintenance.
Early – Mid 2000s, Combat Wing Organization—Centralized Maintenance	CLR Event: Fly/fix tenet; All aircraft maintenance under Maint Group. LRS creation budget Cuts, manpower reductions; declining maintenance trends, fleet health concerns
2008, Proposed Global Wing Organization—Decentralizing Trend *** (Did not occur due to CoS of AF leadership change, however final directive to reorganize had been made with PAD explaining structure)	On-equip maintenance back to OG. Align by mission vs function, APS, LRS move to maintenance (renamed Materiel Group)
Planned Future Wing Re-Organization— Centralized Maintenance, Decentralized Logistics MGG: Mission Generation Groups	Consolidate all on-equipment mxs together; Decentralize/Separate LRS: Portions of logistics (Supply/Fuels) separated from LRS merged into the MGG with Maintenance. Reason: Align functions which directly influence mission generation

Author's Summary of RAND Corp, Air Force CSAF Logistics Review, Improving Wing-Level Logistics, Annex G

Table 2

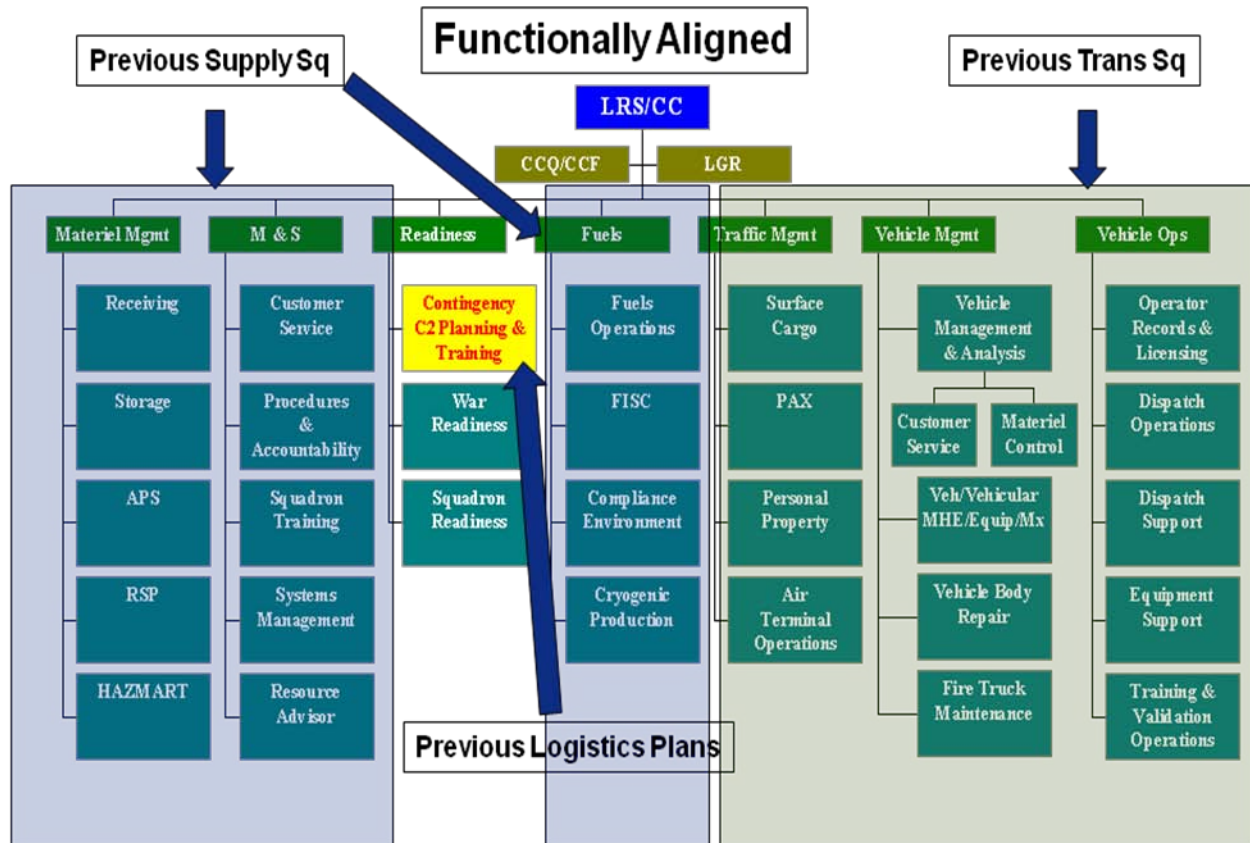
LRO Training Flow (Accession LROs)

Logistics Readiness Officer Training Flow Accession Officers		
Time In Service (TIS)		
0-6 Months	Logistics Readiness Officer Orientation Program (LOOP). 21R1: Attend LRO Basic Course. Successful completion results in award of 21R1 entry level AFSC. Basic Developmental Education (BDE) opportunities begin with Air and Space Basic Course (ASBC) eligibility.	
6 - 9 Months	Begin training in first Core Competency.* Begin gaining experience in first Core Competency.	
1-15 Years	Encouraged to further Logistics education through AFIT LOG courses (Log 199, Log 299, etc.) and targeted Masters Degree programs	
2 Years	For award of AFSC 21R3, the officer must have 24 months experience in any Logistics Readiness function, with 12 continuous months in one of the three core competencies, successful completion for that competency and commander's recommendation. LRO now eligible to deploy. (LRO FAM guide, Section IX.B.3)	
2-6 Years	Window to complete Core Competencies.*%	
4 Years	Promotions to Captain; Squadron Officer School (SOS) window opens.	
5-8 Years	LRO Intermediate Course window.	
7 Years	SOS window closes.	
8-13 Years	IPZ Promotions to Major; Intermediate Developmental Education (IDE) window opens.	
15-17 Years	IDE window closes. IPZ selections to Lieutenant Colonel; Senior Developmental Education (SDE) window opens.	
19-22 Years	SDE window closes. IPZ selections to Colonel	
	* Core Competency Tasks in Section F are projected to become exportable training courses (Date TBD)	% Core Competencies completion is pre-requisite to competing for Special Selection PCE and AAD and for attendance in Intermediate LRO Course (IROC)

Table from Nov 2009 LRO CFETP

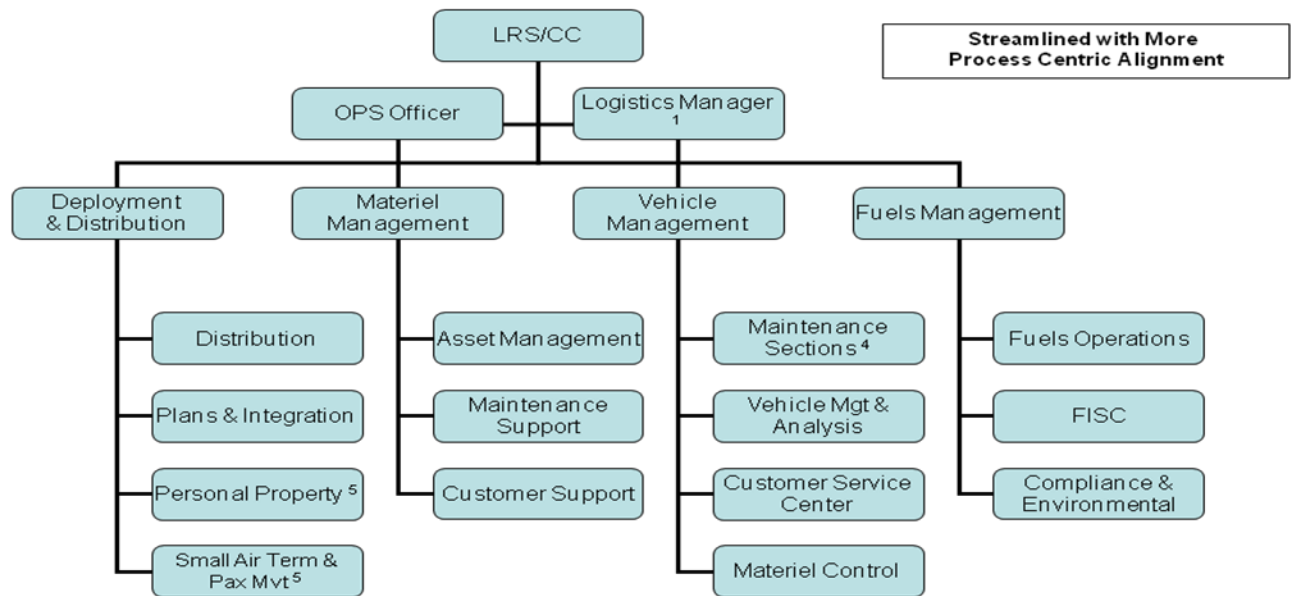
Appendix 1

LRS Organizational Structure 2002-2005



Author's edits to original LRS organizational structure in CFETP 2002

Appendix 2



Streamlined with More
Process Centric Alignment

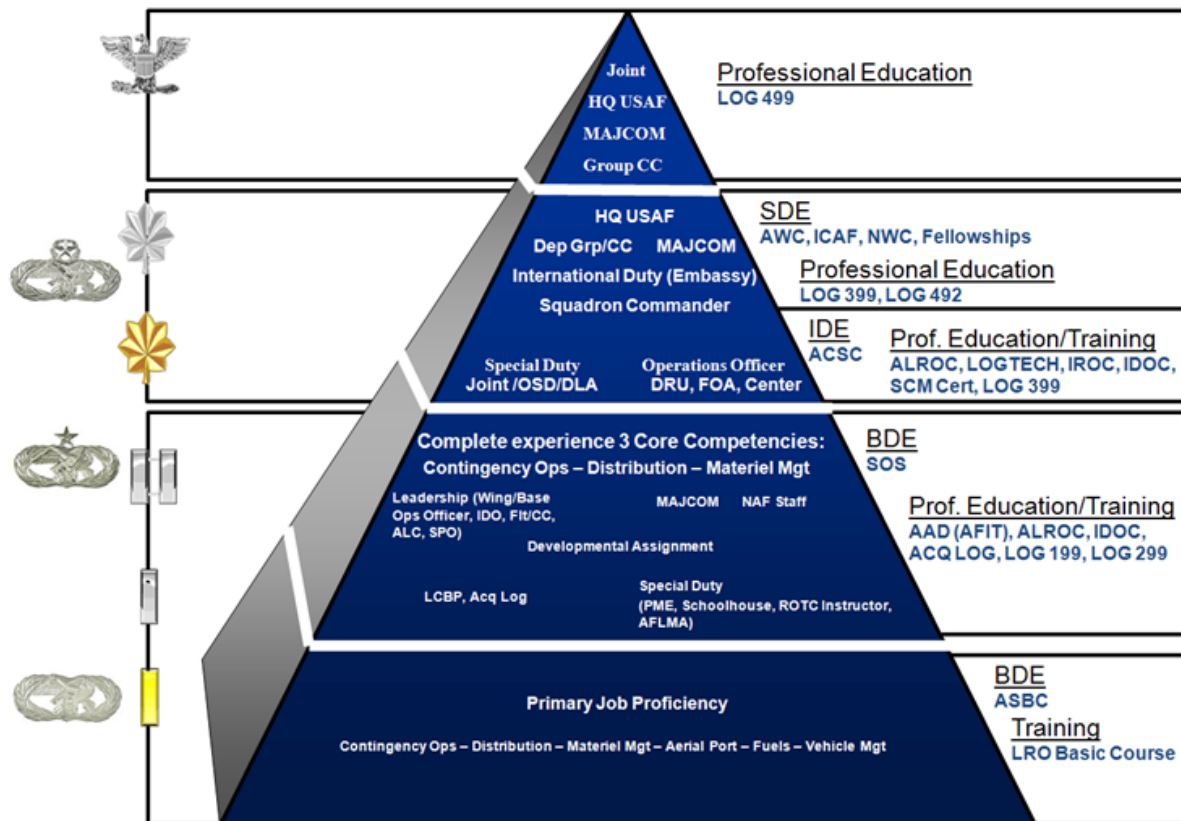
LRS Organizational Structure 2006-Present

Author’s edits to November 2009 CFETP

Appendix 3

LRO Career Pyramid

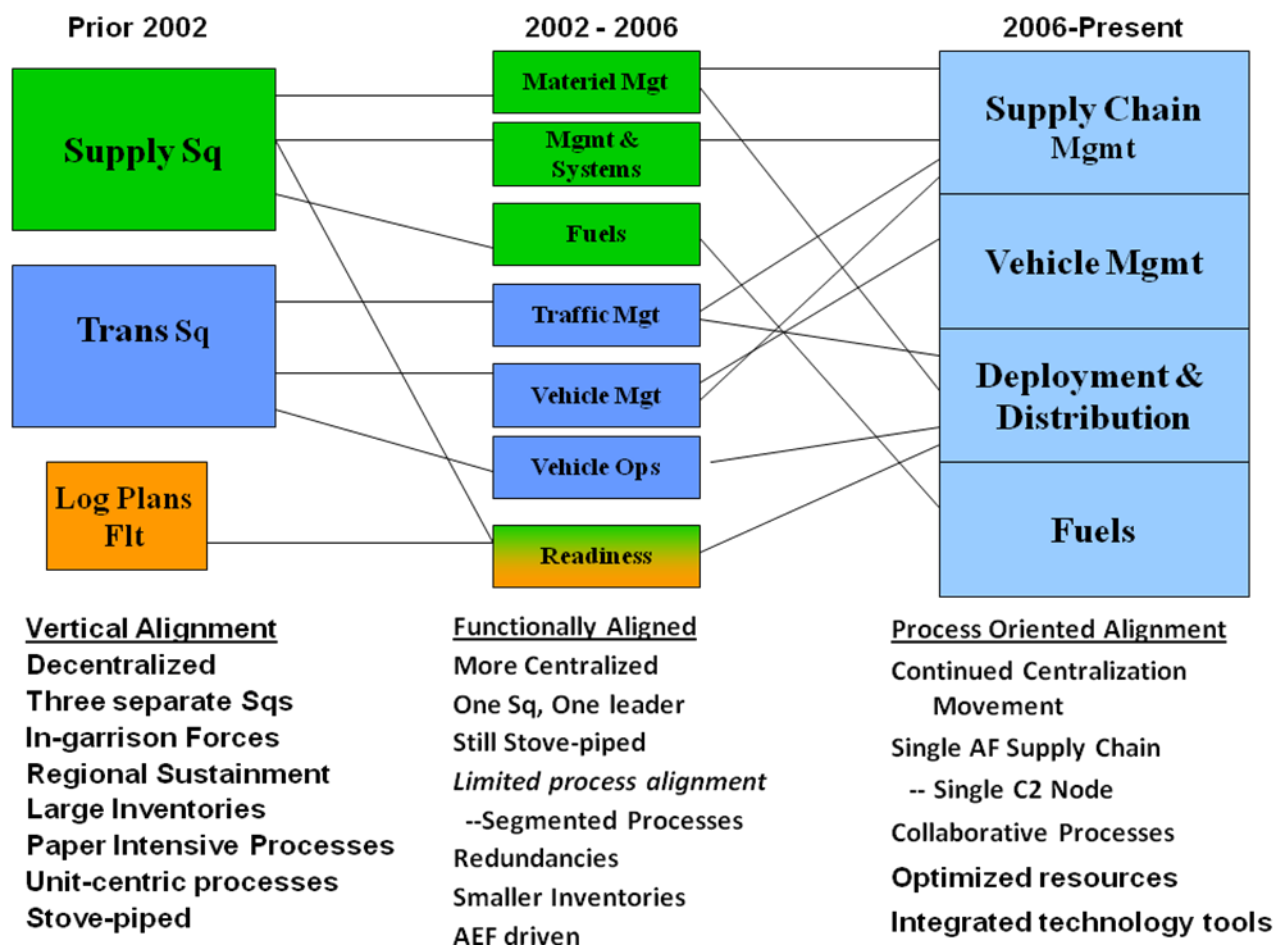
21R Career Path



Taken from November 2009 CFETP

Appendix 4

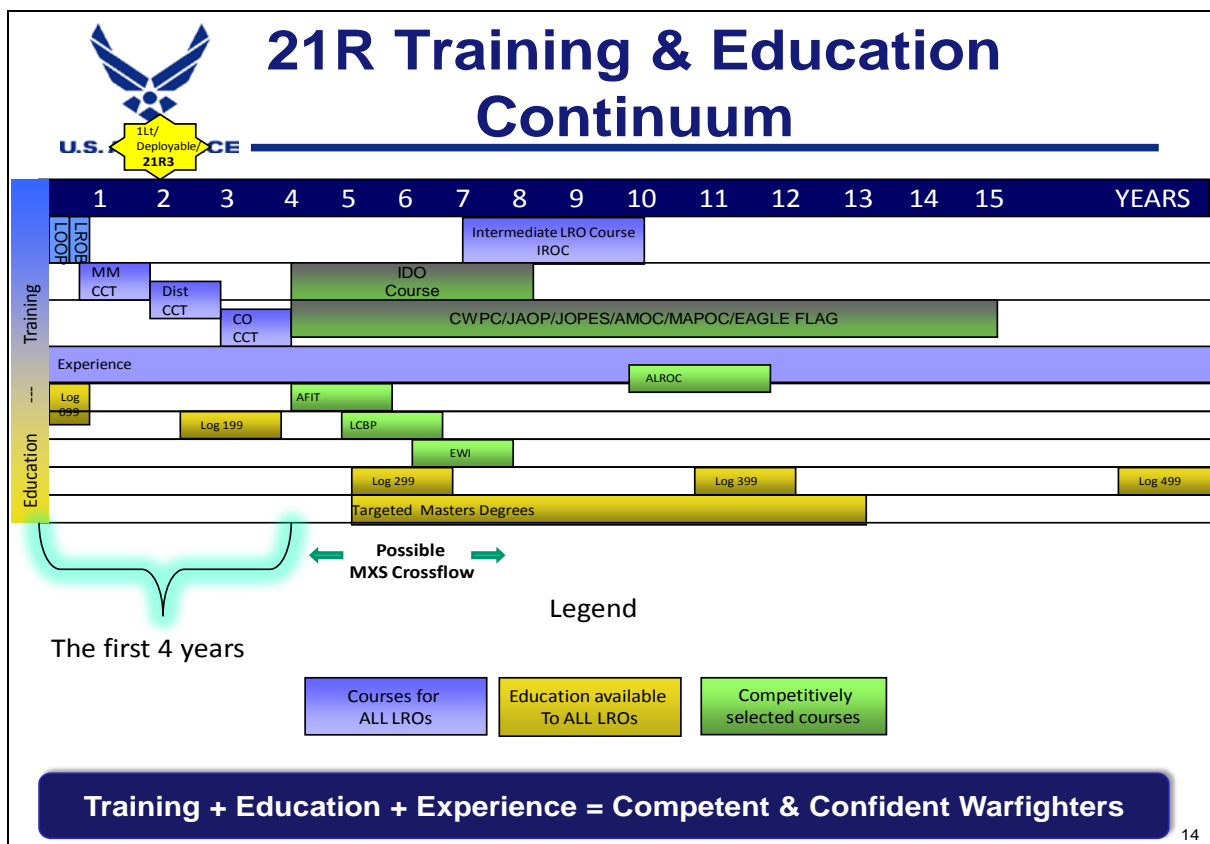
Evolution of LRS – From Functional to Process-Centric



Author developed from HQ/A4 Brief, April 2006

Appendix 5

LRO Training and Education Continuum



Taken from "LRO Update" Brief, AF/A4R, LOA Conference, Oct 2008

Bibliography

- Air Force Basic Doctrine, *Air Force Doctrine Document 1*, Secretary of the Air Force, November 2003.
- Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 2-4. *Agile Combat Support*, March 2005.
- Air Force Logistics Management Agency, "Quotes for the Air Force Logician," *Air Force Journal of Logistics*, (September 2001).
- Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century, *Playbook*, Volume A, Concept of Operation, October 2007.
- AF/A4R Briefing, *Logistics Process Review Initiative*, April 2006.
- Bolman, Lee G., and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991.
- Creech, William, L. General, USAF, "Organizational and Leadership Principals for Senior Leaders," (Speech Transcript Reprint)
- DeVault, Harry, *Logistics Officer Career Development Path: An Overview*, Air Force Journal of Logistics, Volume 19, no. 2 (Spring 1995).
- Global Security.org, *Wing*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usaf/wing.htm>. 2005.
- Greco III, John, "Leading Air Force Logistics," Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, April 2006.
- Headquarters Air Force, A4M, "Merlin Database," (HAF AF/A4M, 2005).
- Holmes, Christopher D., Major, USAF. "Eliminating Functional Stovepipes: Process Organizing the Air Force Logistics readiness Squadron," Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL.: 2006.
- Huston, James A., *Guns and Butter, Powder and Rice: US Army Logistics in the Korean War*, Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1989.
- HQ, USAF/A4, *Career Field Education and Training Plan (CFETP)*, Logistics Readiness Officer, April 2005.
- HQ, USAF/A4, *Career Field Education and Training Plan (CFETP)*, Logistics Readiness Officer, Nov 2009.
- Johnson, Major Charles D. "USAF Aircraft Maintenance Management: Is There a Better Way" Research Report no. AU/ACSC/087/2000-4., Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL, April 2000.
- Joint Publication (JP) 4-0, *Doctrine for Logistics Support of Joint Operations*, July 2008.
- Jumper, John P., General, USAF, "Chief's Sight Picture, Combat Wing Organization," May 2002.
- Jumper, John P., General, USAF. "Headquarters United States of the Air Force, Program Action Directive 02-05, Implementation of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force Direction to Establish a New Combat Wing Organization Structure." HQ USAF, 2002.
- Kotter, John P., *Leading Change*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996.
- Lindsay, Ray A. Kyle H. Matyi, and Air University (U.S). Air Command and Staff College. "CSAF Logistics Review Focused Improvement for EAF Readiness," Research paper., Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL, May 2002.

- Linnean, Harold W. III. "Air Force Smart Operations for the Twenty-first Century, Identifying Potential Failure Points in Sustaining Continuous Process Improvement across the Air Force." Research paper, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL, May 2008.
- Lynch, Kristen, F., John G. Drew, David George, Robert S. Tripp, Charles Robert Roll, Jr., and James A. Leftwich. *The Air Force Chief of Staff Logistics Review: Improving Wing –Level Logistics*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand 2005.
- Mansfield, Robert, BGen, USAF, and Teresa Peterson, BGen, USAF, "Up Front: Changing Air Force Logistics," *The Air Force Journal of Logistics*, Volume XXV, Number 1. Winter 2001.
- McCoy, Gary, T., Major General, USAF, "LRO Update." Briefing. Logistics Officer Association, Columbus, Ohio, 12-15 October 2008.
- McPeak, Merrill A. *Selected Works 1990-1994*. Air University Press, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, August 1995.
- Rinehart, Graham W., Lt Col, USAF, "How the Air Force Embraced 'Partial Quality' (and Avoiding Similar Mistakes in New Endeavors)," *Air and Space Power Journal* 20, no 4 (Winter 2006): 34-43.
- Sanford, David, J. Major, USAF., "Functional Experts for Planning: How does the Air Force Develop Logisticians to Satisfy the Operational Level of War?" Research Paper, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell, AFB, AL. April 2008.
- Trip Report. Logistics Officer Association Conference, 12-15 Oct 2009.
- Zettler, Michael E., Lt Gen, USAF, "Chief's Logistics Review," *Air Force Journal of Logistics* XXV no. 2 (Summer 2001).
- Zettler, Michael E., Lt Col, USAF, "Air Force Logisticians: Generalist or Specialist?" Research paper. Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, VA, 1986.

End Notes

¹ CMSgt Gerard “Jerry” Gething, Superintendent of Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force Executive Action Group (retirement remarks, Andrews AFB, MD, 31 March 2006); taken from in AWC readings, “How the Air Force Embraced “Partial Quality” (and Avoiding Similar Mistakes in New Endeavors,” Lt Col Graham W. Gray Rinehart

² James A. Huston, *Guns and Butter, Powder and Rice: US Army Logistics in the Korean War*, (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1989), 388.

³ Johnson, Major Charles D. “USAF Aircraft Maintenance Management: Is There a Better Way” Research Report no. AU/ACSC/087/2000-4 (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Command and Staff College, April 2000)

⁴ McPeak, Merrill A. Selected Works 1990-1994. Air University Press, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, August 1995, 109.

⁵ Headquarters Air Force A4M, “Merlin Database,” (HAF AF/A4M, 2005)

⁶ Zettler, Lt Gen Michael E., “Chief of Staff Logistics Review,” Air Force Journal of Logistics XXV no. 2 (Summer 2001, 6.

⁷ Ibid. Following DESERT STORM the Air Force embraced the objective wing concept. We replaced detailed regulations and manuals with less specific instructions and policy directives. At the same time, we downsized the force by 25-35 percent while continuing the era of sustained high ops tempo with Northern/Southern Watch, the Balkans, and humanitarian missions worldwide.

⁸ Gen John P. Jumper, chief of staff, US Air Force, Chief’s Sight Picture, Combat Wing Organization, May 02.

⁹ Trip Report, Logistics Officer Association Conference, 12-15 Oct 2009.

¹⁰ Mansfield, Robert, BGen, USAF, and Teresa Peterson, BGen, USAF, *Up Front: Changing Air Force Logistics*, Air Force Journal of Logistics, Volume XXV, Number 1 (Winter 2001, 11).

¹¹ Kristin F. Lynch Et al., *The Air Force Chief of Staff Logistics Review: Improving Wing-Level Logistics*, Santa Monica CA: The Rand Corporation, xix.

¹² Zettler, Lt Gen Michael E., “Chief of Staff Logistics Review,” Air Force Journal of Logistics XXV no. 2 (Summer 2001,15).

¹³ USAF/A4R Briefing, *Logistics Process Review Initiative*, April 2006

¹⁴ Gen John P. Jumper, chief of staff, US Air Force, Chief’s Sight Picture, Combat Wing Organization, May 02.

¹⁵ “If the Air Force wants increased productivity, then one or all of the components of maintenance efficiency must be improved” and that “organizational efficiency has in many cases only a limited impact on the overall efficiency of a maintenance action when compared to what is embodied in the sequence of tasks required in the maintenance action itself.” From: Foster, Capt Dwight J., and Capt John C. Olsen, “A Comparative Evaluation of the Effects of the Implementation of the Production Oriented Maintenance Organization on Aircraft Maintenance,” *School of Systems and Logistics, Air Force Institute of Technology*, Air University, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, September 1978.

¹⁶ *Air Force Basic Doctrine, Air Force Doctrine Document 1*, Secretary of the Air Force, P 28.

¹⁷ HAF/A4LF Brief, *Tempo Band Placement (Logistics Readiness Officer –21R)*, Nov 09 and *BBP on Re-banding Logistics Readiness Officer UTCs to Tempo Band E*, Dec 09 and HAF email correspondence, subject: *09123083 Package BLUE Logistics Readiness Officer (21R) Tempo Band Assessment*, 24 Dec 09.

¹⁸ From Log 199-499 classes, to Contingency Wartime Planning and Aerial Port courses to acquisition, mobility and JOPES classes, the formalized framework for LRO development is succinctly outlined in the CFETP.

¹⁹ Kotter, John P., *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management and Leading Change*, 26.

²⁰ Kotter, John P, *Leading Change*, 27.

²¹ Global Security.org, Wing, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usaf/wing.htm>.